



[Recorded Crime in Scotland 2019-2020](#)

Key findings of interest:

- Between 2018-19 and 2019-20, crimes recorded by the police in Scotland remained almost unchanged, increasing by less than 1% from 246,480 to 246,516. The recording of crime remains at one of the lowest levels seen since 1974.
- The 2019-20 figures include 1,681 new crimes recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018, following its enactment on 1 April 2019. A further 107 new crimes were recorded towards the end of 2019-20 under the Coronavirus Act 2020 and the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulation 2020.
- Non-sexual crimes of violence increased by 16%, from 8,008 to 9,316. This increase is due to the recording of 1,681 new crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018, following its enactment on 1 April 2019. All other non-sexual crimes of violence collectively decreased by 5%.
- Sexual crimes decreased by 1% from 13,547 to 13,364. This is the first year since 2008-09 where sexual crimes haven't increased, though these crimes remain at the second highest level seen since 1971, the first year for which comparable groups are available.
- Crimes of dishonesty decreased by 3%, from 114,506 to 111,409. The recording of these crimes is at the lowest level seen since 1971.
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. decreased by 1% from 47,997 to 47,731. The recording of these crimes is at the lowest level seen since 1976.
- Other crimes increased by 3% from 62,422 to 64,589. Most of these crimes relate to drug possession, crimes against public justice or handling offensive weapons

[Homicide in Scotland 2019-2020](#)

Key findings of interest:

- Between 2018-19 and 2019-20, the number of homicide cases recorded by the police in Scotland increased by 3% (or two cases) from 62 to 64 - this remains one of the lowest number of recorded homicide cases for a single twelve month period since 1976.
- The number of homicide cases in Scotland has remained relatively stable in recent years, with between 59 and 64 cases recorded each year since

2012-13.

- Over the 10 year period from 2010-11 to 2019-20, the number of homicide cases in Scotland fell by 35% (34 cases) from 98 to 64.
- In 2019-20, 64 victims of homicide were recorded, 2% (one victim) more than the 63 victims recorded in 2018-19, of the 64 victims, 70% (45) were male.
- In 2019-20, 76 persons were accused of homicide and 92% (70) of them were male.
- Of the 64 cases of homicide recorded for 2019-20, 63 were solved and one is currently unsolved.
- For each of the last 10 years, the most common method of killing was with a sharp instrument and in 2019-20, a sharp instrument was the main method of killing for 55% (35) of homicide victims.

Comment

It is a positive story to hear recorded crime has increased by less than 1% however, it is worth mentioning that while these statistics are useful, we know there is strong evidence that many crimes are under-reported to the police, especially with the increase in online crime. It is also worth mentioning that we know that while in many cases crime is decreasing, some groups are still suffering the burden of offences, which can be seen in the [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#).

The [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#) also adds more context to these statistics as well as Chapter 4 of the [Scottish Household Survey](#) which has information on how safe people in Scotland feel in their community. In both these reports, it is clear that feelings of safety, a huge component of what makes a community safe, are experienced very differently depending on where a person lives, their age, gender and status in other minority groups.

The increase in the reporting of non-sexual crimes of violence paints a bleak picture, however, this does show how effective the new Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 has been in encouraging victims to report and reaching prosecution. Since the Covid-19 pandemic has taken place, we have seen an upsurge in reporting of domestic violence, so we anticipate the 20-21 figures will reflect this.

It is positive to see crimes of dishonesty and anti-social behaviour decrease, however, again these areas, especially online and doorstep fraud, have seen an increase due to the pandemic which will no doubt be reflected in next year's statistics too.

It is very encouraging to see homicide falling over the last ten years and remaining stable. The figures very much indicate that the majority of victims and perpetrators are male, which ties in with research around the experience of violence in communities. This link with gender and the correlation with knife crime is stark and will require continued focus from national and local partners, especially in light of the pandemic and increasing inequalities.